

## After *RUNNING ON EMPTY*...

Not long ago, I received an inquiry from someone who had read *RUNNING ON EMPTY*. They began by calling attention to two statements I'd made:

- "My life was saved from the killing power of busyness by coming, really coming, to know God through Jesus."
- "Nothing has been more effective in slowing the relentless pace of my driven life than this clearer picture of God found in Jesus."

Offering the point of view that the book *had* done "a great job of showing what a too-hurried life fueled by need looked like", they continued with a question. "Please," they asked, "What were the changes that occurred when Jesus began filling that need? What does a lifestyle fueled by being loved look like?"

Greatly appreciating their profoundly incisive question left me wanting to offer an honest reply. Imagining that you might have the same question, I thought you might wish to know about the steps taken in order to reply.

My discernment about how to reply began during an intimate conversation with those who know me best, having seen me in my brightest and darkest moments.

Lacking confidence, yet longing to know how they would respond, I sat with my family and asked my carefully crafted question. Looking back, I don't know if it was a "moment of courage" or an example of my "ignorance on fire."

"I was simply wondering", I found the courage to begin, "if each of you would tell how you experience me, what you observe as I live my life?" For a moment, nervous smiles appeared on a couple of faces. Their expressions seemed to pose an unspoken question, "Are you serious? Do you really want to know?" For a split

second, I wasn't certain whether I did. However, at this juncture, I'd gone beyond the point of retreat.

The moments that followed remain as treasures in my memory.

"You appear to be less uptight, more peaceful and calm." "You're not as volatile; you're gentler, yet, there's a new kind of strength." "You appear less troubled." "I detect more joy and contentment."

As I reveled in their words, I felt a deep sense of gratitude for the apparent fruit that had begun to appear in my life as a result of God's gracious and kind activity within me. Two things appeared abundantly clear.

- These qualities have been resident in me from the beginning, yet hidden and bound.
- God has been setting me free from things that have held me captive for many years, keeping my "true self" from emerging.

God's unmerited initiative and gracious activity within me has corrected many of my badly mistaken ideas about God and me that for many years have been giving shape to my life. These misconceptions have led me to believe that a relentless pace is required to achieve all that I must do to prove my worth.

Living now, with a clearer awareness of God's power and the relentless nature of God's love and care has enabled me to experience more confidence in God's control over all the things that matter most in my life. Realizing that the things I might otherwise be anxious and worried with are under God's supervision and care has begun to produce a drastic transformation. With a growing confidence in God's undying affection I've been led me into a more peaceful and joyful life. I enjoy greater freedom to say "Yes" to opportunities that produce gladness in my heart and a greater freedom to say "No", even when it's an important thing I've been invited to do.

There's a wonderful assurance growing within me that God is very fond of me and enjoys my company, even above any service I might be able to provide. More confident that this moment and the next, my health and destiny, my work and rest, and even my life and death are entirely God's responsibility has begun to calm the waters of my once restless and stormy soul.

Recalling my once crazed schedule, fueled by my empty heart, I pondered the question: "How is this change being reflected on my calendar?"

Immediately I realize the most important answers aren't that simple and obvious. The most significant changes don't appear to me on the surface of my life, but deep within. My days were once spent impersonating the person I believed I must be to gain the recognition and approval of God and others. Today my schedule is a much more accurate reflection of the person I truly am. As a result, there are significant and visible changes. This new vision of God's approval has led me to a new vocation; a fresh set of values, and a profound gratitude for the life that is mine to live.

Today, because I'm less concerned with what others think, my schedule is less crowded with things I once imagined would earn me recognition and fill my empty heart. Spending less time at the altar of adulation, worshipping the recognition and approval of others, has opened more space for doing those things I used to feel immense guilt about ignoring. However, this doesn't mean that I'm less busy. No, it simply means that there's time now, for things I was always before hoping to "squeeze" into my schedule. Looking at my calendar I see scheduled time for rest, play, family, friends, and prayer. There's even time for "wasting time" which is often useful in exposing the illusion of my indispensability.

Today, I revel in the truth spoken to me years ago. "Fil, God loves you too much for you to become necessary."



Fall 2004

## Fil's 2004 Fall Calendar

### October

- 6 10-week Wed. 6:30 Class # 4- focus: Answering the Call: Ancient Prayer Practices- Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC
- 7 Young Life Fund Raising Dinner—Lake Norman, NC
- 13 10-week Wed. 6:30 Class #5- focus: Answering the Call: Ancient Prayer Practices- Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC
- 14-17 Series of Events sponsored by The Anchorage, Greenville, SC
- 20 10-week Wed. 6:30 Class #6- focus: Answering the Call: Ancient Prayer Practices- Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC
- 23 St. Mark's Church Men's Breakfast, Burlington, NC
- 24 Providence Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, NC
- 27 10-week Wed. 6:30 Class # 7- focus: Answering the Call: Ancient Prayer Practices- Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC

### November

- 3 10-week Wed. 6:30 Class # 8- focus: Answering the Call: Ancient Prayer Practices- Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC
- 4 Retreat for NC Pastors
- 7 Southminster Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, GA
- 10 10 week Wed. 6:30 Class # 9 focus: Answering the Call: Ancient Prayer Practices- Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC
- 12-14 Men's Retreat for Charlotte's St. John's Baptist Church, Montreat, NC
- 17 10 week Wed. 6:30 Class # 10- focus: Answering the Call: Ancient Prayer Practices- Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC

## A Note From Fil

I can't recall a season in my life, thus far, that's been more rich, meaningful, and full of joy and contentment. I thank God for the privilege of living my life.

I have a certainty about God's relentless love and care for me that has produced a wonderful serenity. At long last, the truth in my head seems to be trickling slowly into my heart.

Lucie, continues teaching first graders at Caldwell Academy. After three weeks, teaching English to a group of Chinese educators in the city of Shanghai this past summer, I am certain Lucie will never be the same. I admire the changes. Her heart is so tender toward this fascinating culture and its people.

Our three children (2 of them adults) are maturing in ways that make me extremely proud of them and grateful for the honor and joy that I find in being their father.

My vocation is a wonderful gift from God. It is stunningly apparent that God is intent on re-forming my weak, twisted, and deceptive character until finally, my true self, the person God created me to be, emerges.

There has been an encouraging response to *RUNNING ON EMPTY*. I have continued my surprising discovery of a love for writing. This summer I wrote and submitted a chapter to IV Press on the subject, "The Transformation of a Man's Vocation", hoping it will be accepted for publication within a book entitled, *THE TRANSFORMATION OF A MAN'S HEART*. An article entitled, "Confessions of a Recovering Strive-aholic" that I wrote, will be appearing in the January/February issue of Discipleship Journal. I have also begun work on a second book, which I am especially excited about.

Enclosed (next page) is a leaflet about an event unfolding Oct 14-17, 2004, when this newsletter will likely arrive.

My purpose for making it available to you is twofold:

- Please pray for each event.
- It would thrill me for others to have the kind of vision and determination of Cathie Powell and her team of people with The Anchorage in Greenville, SC. I would be pleased to have opportunities like this event affords, to occur in other cities. Could you envision something like this happening in your church or city?

There's a personal desire I'd like to express to you. Oftentimes I yearn to know there are people praying for me with a clear and timely knowledge of the service opportunities God is providing.

**Would you prayerfully consider sending me a brief e-mail, indicating your interest in receiving a "Monday Morning Note", via e-mail, informing you of opportunities for which prayer would be appreciated? Just drop me a note saying, "Add me to the Monday Morning Note Network" and I'll add you to the list. Please, if you wish and are able, send your request to:**

**filanderson@triad.rr.com**

Finally, please accept my most earnest thanks for your friendship and the myriad of ways it's expressed. Also, please know how heartfelt is the gratitude the Board of Journey Resources and I are for your financial support.

Please visit our Internet Website at [www.journeyresources.org](http://www.journeyresources.org) for updates.

# The Anchorage brings you: **Fil Anderson** **October 14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>**



Fil is Executive Director of Journey Resources, a Ministry of Spiritual Guidance. He is a frequent retreat facilitator and conference speaker and also offers spiritual direction. A graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary, he also completed the Spiritual Guidance Program at The Shalem Inst. Bethesda, MD

Fil worked with Young Life for 25 years, eventually serving as national director of training. He and his wife, Lucie, live in Greensboro with their three children.

Fil has written a book marked by what Brennan Manning calls "Scorching honesty and humble transparency." One promo piece for his book used these words: "The Journey from Self-importance to God-importance." The church has bought into the corporate mindset by pushing to maximize every believer's productivity for God. As a result, many Christians believe God values what they do more than who they are. *Running on Empty* helps readers reclaim and experience the biblical truth of God's love and care for them no matter what they accomplish for God.

In this achingly authentic book Anderson takes readers on a journey from achieving to being and shows them how to utilize silence, solitude, prayer, Scripture, meditation, and other spiritual disciplines, to enjoy a new experience of being with their caring, loving God. He shares the healing insights that restored his spiritual bearings and gave him a profound sense of intimacy with God, the God who specializes in filling empty souls.

## **TWO (2) BOOK STUDIES using *Running on Empty***

One begins prior to Fil's visit, one after. Please register (\$5) by Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> for Jim's group or Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> for Peggy's

Fee: \$5 - 100  
 Suggested amount: \$30 does not include \$17 book.

**Thursday Evenings, Sept 9<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>  
 7 – 9 PM with Jim Caprell, M. Div.**

Please plan to attend all 4 sessions.

**Thursday Mornings, Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> & Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>  
 9 AM - 12 with Peggy Dulaney, MSN, RN, BC**

Please plan to attend all 3 sessions.

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

Fil is leading all the other options, and with the exception of the overnight retreat all are based on his well-received book *Running on Empty*, but tailored specifically to each group as the needs of business folks may differ from those of youth, or clergy or other care-givers.

## **Parent's Morning Out**

**Thurs, Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>**

Fee: \$5 - 100

Suggested amount: \$10

**9:30 – 11:00 AM**

Register (\$5) by Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>

## **Business Lunch**

**Thurs., Oct. 14**

Fee: \$5 – 100

Suggested amount: \$20

Location: Hilton. Greenville, SC

**12 – 1:30 PM**

Register (\$5) by Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>

## **Dinner for Care-givers**

**(If you help care for others, we want you here!)**

**Thurs., Oct. 14**

Fee: \$5 – 100

Suggested Amount: \$20

Location: Chapel Garden Room, Furman Univ.

**7:00 – 9:00 PM**

Register (\$5) by Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>

**Thank you for any gift above the suggested amount!**

## **Clergy Lunch**

**Friday, Oct. 15**

Fee: \$5 - 100

Suggested amount: \$20

Location: Hilton, Greenville, SC

**12:30 – 2:00 PM**

Register (\$5) by Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>

## **“The Woman with the Alabaster Jar: an Overnight**

**Retreat”** For two years this woman has captured Fil's heart, so she and Jesus, will be the focus of our retreat. Meeting under the stars and in the cool breezes as much as weather permits, we will have time to reflect together and in solitude on this most intimate relationship with God, who loves us beyond measure. Everyone will have a single room with bath.

**Fri. Oct. 15, 5 PM – Sat. Oct. 16, 2 PM**

Fee: \$5 – 200

Register (\$5) by Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>

Suggested amount \$150, includes 3 meals and room.

Location: The Latimer Inn, Calhoun Falls, SC

## **Spiritual Directors International (SDI)**

Anyone is welcome. Know that we will include a brief SDI meeting at the end of the evening.

**Sat., Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>**

**4:30 – 7:30 PM**

Fee: \$35 (Includes supper) Payable to “SDI” by Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>

## **Preaching/Teaching, Christ Church Episcopal**

**Sun. Oct. 17<sup>th</sup> 9:45 AM in Markley Chapel**

Followed by Sunday School, McKissick Refectory

**College & Young Adults Lunch in same area**

Fee: \$5 – 100

Register (\$5) by Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>

Suggested amount \$10

## **High School Youth & Youth Workers**

**Sun. Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>**

**5:45 to 8 PM**

Fee: \$5 – 100

Register (\$5) by Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>

Suggested amount: \$10 (includes light supper)

Location: Fellowship Hall, First Baptist, Greenville

## **The Anchorage**

**(864) 297-5308**

P. O. Box 9091 Greenville, SC 29604

[cathie@theanchorage.org](mailto:cathie@theanchorage.org)

**All events are at The Anchorage unless otherwise noted.**